**Cornell University**

**ASRC 1900/LSP 1101: Research Strategies in Latino and Africana Studies**

**Course Syllabus Spring 2018**

Tues. & Thurs. 1:30 pm – 2:20 pm Uris Library Electronic Classroom (Gallery Level of Uris Library)

Tony Cosgrave [ajc5@cornell.edu](mailto:ajc5@cornell.edu) 607-255-7148

Office Hours:

106 Olin Library by appt.

Tom Ottaviano [tjo65@cornell.edu](mailto:tjo65@cornell.edu) 607-255-8125

Office Hours:

[Mann Library by appt](http://mannlib.cornell.edu/about/staff).

# Course Description:

This course will introduce you to resources, research strategies and the critical thinking skills needed for finding and evaluating materials at Cornell University Library and beyond. Attention will be given to various formats using information resources such as the library catalog, print and electronic indexes, etc. Time will be devoted to both lecture and hands-on learning.

# Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester each student will:

1. Formulate a research topic.
2. Analyze their information needs for a particular subject.
3. Learn basic library research strategies.
4. Navigate the Cornell University Library for research on their topic.
5. Critically evaluate research materials.
6. Cite material correctly.

# Student Responsibilities:

You will be expected to contribute to an environment conducive to the learning of all students. This contribution includes, but is not limited to:

1. Respecting the opinions of others.
2. Being prepared to participate actively.
3. Taking responsibility for your learning and progress in the course.
4. Seeking help from the instructor as needed.
5. Handing assignments in on time.

All the work done in the course is designed to enable you to successfully complete the final research project.

# Class Policies:

1. It is always your responsibility to know when assignments are due.
2. Ambiguity about assignments should be resolved in the following manner: ask

questions in class; see instructor before or after class; call, email, or arrange a meeting at a convenient time with instructor.

1. Assignments are due on time. All assignments contribute to a final research project due at the end of the course.
2. For all assignments you hand in, be sure to make and keep a usable backup copy.

That is, email a copy to yourself or save it to a flash drive. You may need to rework

previously submitted homework, so keeping a usable copy is VERY important.

1. Do not plagiarize. That is, do not copy anyone else’s work. Do your own research

and write out your own annotations. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any way.

1. Complete the reading assignments. This means being able to demonstrate that you

have read the assigned class readings, and can engage in classroom discussion on the

readings.

1. Arrive to class on time.

# Course Requirements:

1. Citation and annotation drafts
2. One 10 source annotated bibliography
3. One 3-5 minute presentation
4. Participation in class discussions and attendance

# Grading:

Attendance, participation, written work, and other assignments will be taken into account in determining final grades for the course. Attendance and class participation are 25%, citation and annotation drafts are 25% and the final annotated bibliography is 50%. This course is 1.0 credit. More than one unexcused absence will result in a **failing grade**. Grading details:

5 points - Thesis Statement

5 points – Encyclopedia citation and annotation

5 points – Book citation and annotation

5 points – Scholarly journal citation and annotation

5 points – Newspaper or magazine citation and annotation

25 points – Class attendance and participation including presentation

50 points – Final annotated bibliography (5 points/source)

# Annotated Bibliography Research Project:

The final project will be a 10 source annotated bibliography. All 10 sources must support and address the topic that has been approved. Each source must be cited using MLA citation style, and accompanied by an annotation. In part, an annotation is a descriptive and evaluative paragraph of a work, usually about 150 words. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the source cited.

The final annotated bibliography must include:



Two encyclopedia essays

Two books (or book chapters)

Two scholarly journal articles

Two magazine articles

Two newspaper articles

One primary source (optional and can substitute for one of the sources above)

By week three you will be handing in weekly annotation drafts which contribute to a cumulative final annotated bibliography.

# Topic Selection Guidelines:

Take some time to reflect on the topic that you will be researching for this class. Although you won’t be writing a research paper, you will be reading and critically evaluating research materials. Think about your work in this class as a chance to become more informed on a subject of interest to you.

Your proposed topic should be of interest to you. It should be broad enough so that there is a variety of information available on the topic. It should lend itself to scholarly treatment, or an examination of the issues associated with the topic in relationship to Latino and or Africana Studies, or a topic relating to a class that you are currently taking outside of Latino and Africana Studies.

# Individual Presentation:

You are expected to give a 3-5 minute presentation (or summation) of your final annotated

bibliography. The presentation must include:

1. What your topic is and why you chose it.
2. A brief summary of what you found.
3. The best source or the favorite source you found and why.

(N.B.: Each student in this course is expected to abide by the **Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity**. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit must be the student's own work. **One example of violating this code is stated as "knowingly representing the work of others as one's own**." For the Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging the Work of Others, see [http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html).](http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html))

# class1 – Tuesday, March 20

Introductions



Review syllabus, assignments, class policies, blackboard site, and grading.

**Homework: Read “Analyzing a Research Topic”**

# class2 – Thursday, March 22

Introduction to the Cornell University Library

Formulating a topic/narrowing a topic



**Homework: Read “Reference Sources (pgs. 173-182)”**

# class3 – Tuesday, March 27

Avoiding Accidental Plagiarism

The importance of library research strategy

# class4 – Thursday, March 29

Finding background information - Introduction to Reference Sources

* + Gale Virtual Reference
  + Sage Knowledge
  + Oxford African American Studies Center
  + Oxford Encyclopedia of Latinos and Latinas in the United States

Subject/Research guides

Important services to know (ILL, Borrow Direct, Holds, Recalls, Book Delivery)

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# Spring Break: March 31 – April 8

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**class5 – Tuesday, April 10**

Searching the CUL online catalog



Understanding Library of Congress Subject Headings and Classification

Advanced catalog searching



In-class exercise on catalog searching

**Homework: Working topic--thesis statement and 1 MLA cited annotated encyclopedia essay due class 6, April 12. Email this assignment to instructor before class and bring a print copy to class.**

# class6 – Thursday April 12

Intro to finding journal articles



Distinguishing scholarly from non-scholarly journals

Interdisciplinary databases

# Homework: 1 MLA cited annotated book source due class 7, April 17. Email this assignment to instructor before class.

**class7 – Tuesday, April 17**

Other discipline specific databases

**class8 – Thursday, April 19 [Guest lecturer Michael Engle]**



News resources

Fake News

# Homework: 1 MLA cited annotated scholarly journal article due class 9, April 24. Email this assignment to instructor before class.

**class9 – Tuesday, April 24**

Student Database Presentations

**class10 – Thursday, April 26 [Guest lecturer Lynn Thitchener, Government Librarian]**

Government documents and statistics sources

**class11 – Tuesday, May 1** [Meet in the Rare & Manuscripts Collections in Kroch Library, Room 2B48]

Primary source research Special Collections



# Homework: 1 MLA cited annotated newspaper or magazine article due class 12, May 3. Email this assignment to the instructor before class.

# Class12–Thursday, May 3

Class presentations

# Class13–Tuesday, May 8

Class presentations



Discussion - what have you learned? Course evaluations

# Final annotated bibliography assignment due in class.